

# Discovery, Not Dictation

by Ralph Rittenhouse, Senior Pastor 32 Years at Camarillo Community Church

Why are the micro-groups we talk about in GDI so effective for accelerating authentic spiritual growth? For twenty-five years as a pastor, I depended on dictation. I studied hard all week, then stood on the platform on Sunday to excitedly share what I had learned from God's Word. I provided notetaking outlines in the worship program to assist sincere learners.

After more than two decades of this, we took a congregational survey to determine how much of fundamental orthodox doctrine the congregants really understood. I was shocked! Not only was there still great confusion, but things they did seem to understand, couldn't be intelligibly articulated or shared with someone else.

I remember the Sunday I stood before the congregation and told them, "If you have to make the choice to come to hear me preach, or go to your discipleship quad...go to your quad. You'll learn much more from the ninety minutes of preparation and ninety minutes of interaction with your quad, than I'll be able to teach you in a month of Sundays." Why?

## **In a Disciplemaking MicroGroup:**

- Each person is encouraged to dig into scripture and discover truths.
- Each comes to share their discoveries with the group.
- The Holy Spirit is the teacher; the leader only facilitates discussion.
- The Bible is the text.

No one carries the responsibility of teaching everyone else. Everyone is trusted to contribute to each session. Multiple sharing enriches everyone. Truth is discovered and defined in community.

## **Benefits:**

- Discovered truth is more easily remembered truth.
- Truth defined in community is more accurate truth.
- Truth shared builds relational bonds.
- God's truths that are shared build lasting relationships.
- Tight group relationships increase individual strength.
- Individual articulation of God's truth cements it in the heart.
- Collective accountability insures application and change.
- Discovery not dictation accelerates authentic transformation.

